

VOL. 4, ISSUE 9  
APRIL 10, 2008

# the eye



# ALWAYS HARLEM

## THE MANHATTANVILLE PROJECT

CONVERSATIONS WITH THOSE AFFECTED  
BY COLUMBIA'S NORTHWARD EXPANSION

RA RA RIOT DISSECTS THE FINER  
POINTS OF MYSPACE

JONATHAN COULTON GEEKS IT UP

KEEPING KOSHER ON CAMPUS, IF  
ONLY FOR A DAY

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# THE MANHATTANVILLE PROJECT 07

One writer and three photographers traveled above 125<sup>th</sup> Street to discover how Manhattanville residents really feel about Columbia’s expansion.

*Reporting by Raphael Pope-Sussman  
Photos by Molly Crossin, Diana Wong, and Daniella Zalcman*

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## CORRECTIONS

In last week’s “Model Airheads,” it was incorrectly stated that Jaslene was the Cycle 10 winner of *America’s Next Top Model*. She actually won Cycle 8. Additionally, “The Columbia Records” suggested that campus band The Kitchen Cabinet drew inspiration for its name from Abraham Lincoln’s group of advisers. The Kitchen Cabinet counseled Andrew Jackson. *The Eye* regrets the errors.

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

If there’s anything I’ve learned over the last few weeks, it’s this: time waits for no mono.

I was diagnosed last Monday, but I’d been feeling fatigued for weeks. I’d convinced myself I was just being a sissy: *You’re tired?* the drill sergeant in my head queried. *Big deal: Welcome to Columbia.* Insert the Alma Mater joke here—only at Columbia, it seems, is it possible to ignore the symptoms of what is generally agreed to be a pretty intense condition, simply because you’re surrounded by like-minded individuals. How could I complain of sleepiness when my best friends were pulling consecutive all-nighters?

Upon hearing you have mononucleosis, *everyone* will apologize and say, “That sucks.” Those who haven’t had it will try *very subtly* to step back a bit, maybe find a way to drop the single strand of spaghetti you’ve been sharing. Those who’ve been through it will immediately delve into their own stories. “I think it’s partially psychosomatic,” music editor Jennie Rose Halperin offers. She, too, fought the illness off for a while—“and then I was diagnosed, and I just fell asleep for two weeks.”

*Spec’s* arts and entertainment deputy, Rebecca Evans, calls mono “the perfect teenager disease,” and I’m inclined to agree. Essentially, mono gives you license to lay around for a couple of months and just let the ennui wash over you. You don’t have any energy or

motivation, and for once, *that’s okay*. Managing editor Amanda Sebba, after learning about my condition, called across the office: “Alex! Do you have mono? *Don’t exercise!* Your spleen will explode!” I laughed, gratified. I wouldn’t be exercising anyway, don’t worry, but now I had a legitimate reason: my splenic health! Score one for mono—I’m taking the elevator!

Of course, then there’s the flip side: one friend’s gchat mention of encephalitis was enough to send me, scared, to the Wikipedia page for mono. Apparently, in addition to encephalitis, I could get meningitis and/or “various cytopenias.” What the fuck is a cytopenia?

I do feel, though, that maybe the shelf life for mono sympathy is a little shorter than the duration of the illness. Everyone’s been great so far, for sure, but I wonder when they (and you, dear reader) will get sick of my bitching. With this in mind, I’m going home this weekend to sleep for 50 hours straight, punctuated only by a little light reading (Foucault in one hand, the latest *Entertainment Weekly* in the other) and my mom’s cookies. Rest assured, I won’t be whining about it in next week’s letter—I mean, unless I’ve developed various cytopenias.

—Alexandria Symonds



# Ballad and the Geek

hillary ford interviews jonathan coulton

INTERVIEW BY HILLARY FORD

PHOTO COURTESY OF JONATHAN COULTON

A MAINSTREAM MUSICIAN might have qualms about writing a pop/rock romantic ballad for a pining computer programmer (“Code Monkey”) or a Christmas song set in a dystopian robot-controlled future (“Chiron Beta Prime”). Fortunately, Jonathan Coulton isn’t a mainstream musician, and his growing fan base isn’t looking for mainstream music. A former computer programmer, Coulton has a music career based on free Internet downloads and Creative Commons, which allows other artists to use his work. As a result, the singer has been featured in games *World of Warcraft* and *Portal*, on the *Daily Show*, and on its correspondent John Hodgman’s spin-off *The Areas of My Expertise*. A cult sensation, Coulton has expanded his public presence through “free music” enough that, on tour, he makes more now than he did as a programmer. Hillary Ford probed the mind of the mad genius. This is what she uncovered.

**Do you consider yourself a geek who writes songs, or a songwriter who is interested in computers and science fiction/fantasy? Or are the categories less black-and-white than the way many people see them?**

That’s a hard choice to make because I think they’re both true—I’m not as well-versed in the entire geek canon as many people expect me to be, but I certainly identify as a member of that cultural group. But in terms of what motivates me creatively, it starts with being a songwriter. I write about geeky things when they come to me, but it’s not all I do. And it’s not something I consciously consider. For the most part it doesn’t feel like what I write about is my decision—I sort of have to take whatever comes to me, and often that’s something kind of geeky.

**How has the Internet affected your popularity? Do you think you could be where you are without it?**

There’s no way I’d be where I am without the Internet, mostly because I’ve always been too lazy to build a musical career in the traditional way. It’s just so much work! I make no secret of the fact that my plan was to put music online and let the Internet do the work for me, and I continue to be surprised and grateful that it does actually seem to work that way. There are so many things about it that are great for creative people—you don’t need a massive audience anymore because creating, distributing, and marketing has become so incredibly cheap. You don’t need to figure out who your audience is, because they will find you. And once you do have an audience, you can have a direct conversation with them through e-mail and blogging and message boards. There’s never been a better time to be an artist.

**Do you usually think of lyrics and then write music to go with them, or does the music come first? How often are they linked?**

They come together usually—it all starts with a little snippet of something, usually a phrase with a melody and some lyrics. And then I build from there a piece at a time, figure out what the chords might be, lay some words on top, write more chords, etc.

**Was it ever hard to come up with songs for the *Thing a Week* series, or was it easier when you always had a deadline?**

I wouldn’t describe it as easy, really ever. There was certainly a lot more output when I had a deadline, but it was always pretty hard, sometimes real torture. I often had to post something I didn’t like very much, because it was the only thing I had been able to come up with. And every week started with a feeling of certainty that this was going to be the week I ran out of ideas completely. I eventually learned to ignore that feeling, and while it didn’t make it any less real, it did make it possible for me to put that in a little box inside my head and forget about it while I got to work.

**You say you’re “engaged in an experiment to see whether or not it’s possible to make a living as an independent musician.” Would you forsake this experiment if a major record label approached you with a tempting offer?**

The issue at this point is that I am making a living the way things are—I’m not getting rich, but I’m not starving either. For a label to come along and start taking a percentage of this thing that I’ve built myself, I’d have to be convinced that they’d be able to make it worth my while in some way. What it comes down to is that I don’t really feel like I need a label at this point, because I’m already doing what I set out to do. But I’m not opposed to it on principle or anything.

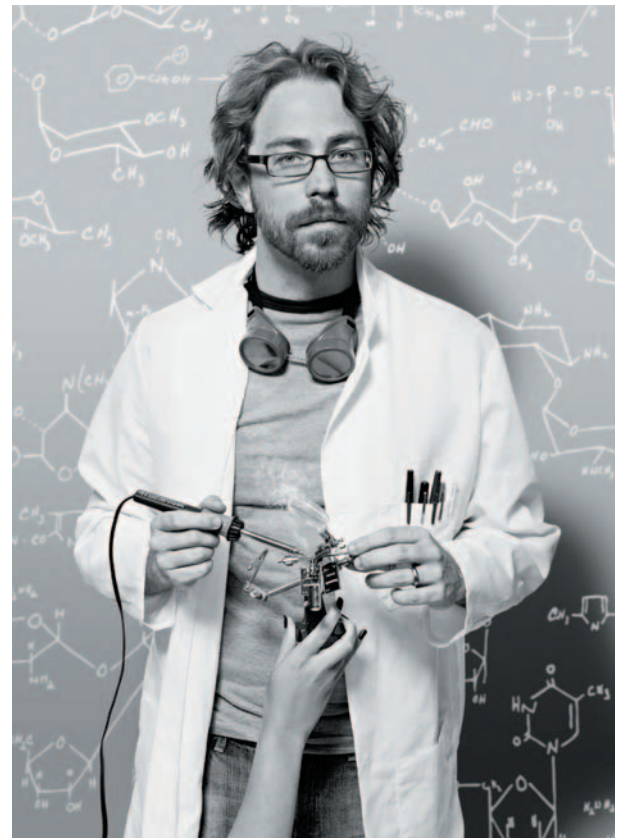
**Building off of the last question, would you ever consider reneging on your current “free music” stance?**

Sure, if I thought it wasn’t working. I don’t give away music because I’m nice, I actually believe it helps me to have the music circulating out there. My experience has been that fans are always willing to support artists they love, whether the music is free or not. And because I’m just a one-man operation, it costs me very little to record and perform, so the number of paying fans doesn’t need to be huge in order to support me. Though when you think about it, music is pretty free anyway if you really want it, whether or not it’s been given away by the artist. It’s a little foolish to think we can get that genie back in the bottle.

**Looking back, how did the *Thing a Week* project help you as an artist, both personally and within the music community?**

It was hugely successful in growing my audience—I had a couple of hits over the course of that year that brought lots of new listeners. Before I started it I wasn’t making a living this way, and by the time I finished it I was. Now I’m able to travel, play shows in front of large audiences around the country, which is pretty amazing. And from a personal standpoint, it helped me a great deal with my songwriting skills. I learned to trust myself, I learned that I can actually make things happen rather than waiting for inspiration.

**Many of your songs have become extremely popular in the geek community. How do you feel about having the story of, for example, “Skull-crusher Mountain” (in which a mad scientist falls**



Jonathan Coulton brings the sex appeal back to the soldering iron: a former computer programmer, the musician has made a name for himself with geek-rock audiences.

**for his captive) re-enacted through dance at geek conventions?**

I’m thrilled about that kind of stuff—there’s no better validation for me than to hear that someone cares enough about one of my songs to actually create something new out of it. Because I’m a fan as well, and I know what that means when you love a song so much that it makes you want to draw pictures and write plays and do interpretive dances.

**Who are your greatest musical influences?**

I grew up on a diet of Beatles, Billy Joel, Simon and Garfunkel, and Dan Fogelberg, branching out into Pink Floyd, XTC, Loudon Wainwright, and Steely Dan when I got a little older. Nowadays I love anything that’s vocal heavy, singable, and hooky. I steal from They Might Be Giants constantly and proudly.

**What current artists do you like? Is there any one artist today who you think should get more recognition?**

I’ve been really into this album by Tally Hall recently. I also have a big old soft spot for a band called Spiraling. Neither of them has really exploded yet, and it’s one of those things where I can’t figure out how that could possibly be, because I think they’re both awesome.

**One of your most popular songs, “Re: Your Brains,” is a play on the man-eat-man world of the corporate world in which the protagonist’s boss has become an actual zombie. I have to ask—what is your zombie apocalypse plan?**

1. Head north.
2. Shoot them in the head. ☹

# Hitting the Bhangra

## getting down with columbia's bhangra team

BY MELANIE WENIGER  
PHOTO BY MOLLY CROSSIN

WITH BRIGHT BLUE AND PURPLE vardian (the Punjabi word for “costume”), large turbans, and wide smiles, Columbia’s bhangra dance group, cuBHANGRA, always looks like it’s having the most fun on campus. Its fan base extends beyond Morningside Heights, as the group has been scheduled to perform at a number of private events, even J.P. Morgan’s Diwali dinner. It’s obvious the team has been doing something right.

“There is just something about bhangra that everybody loves—I don’t know what it is. You don’t need to know about it or understand it to enjoy it—it’s really accessible. It’s a layman’s dance,” says Sonia Sekhar, CC ’08 and co-captain of cuBHANGRA.

Bhangra originated in the north Indian region of Punjab and is traditionally performed during the harvest and various other holidays. CuBHANGRA was founded in 2002 by a group of mutual friends.

“I’m pretty sure all but one of them [the original

Sekhar says. “We stress at tryouts that it’s not just a team, we’re looking for people who we can be friends with. We’re doing the team to have fun, so we have a fun group where everybody enjoys each other’s company and enjoys dancing,” Sahni adds.

CuBHANGRA competes against other college teams at some of the biggest bhangra events each year, most notably Bhangra Blowout in Washington, D.C., hosted by George Washington University—the oldest bhangra competition in the United States—

the more modern music, and it’s exciting and fun to watch.”

The team members of cuBHANGRA create all of their own choreography and attempt to keep the dance fresh with their choice of moves. “One of the things that is different [about cuBHANGRA] from other schools and other independent teams is that a lot of other teams try really hard to be really close to exactly the way people dance in India, the traditional way of dancing. We try to be a little more

*DESPITE ITS TRADITIONAL ROOTS, BHANGRA HAS CERTAINLY MODERNIZED SINCE SPREADING TO THE U.K., U.S., AND CANADA IN THE 1990s, SAHNI SAYS. THE MUSIC NOW IS “MORE YOUTH-ORIENTED AND HAS MORE OF A HIP-HOP INFLUENCE,” HE SAYS.*



members] was Indian, and the other was a Jamaican guy. It was founded by two students who were sophomores at the time, but they had members of all years. They learned bhangra, like the rest of us, by growing up dancing at Indian parties and weddings and by watching other bhangra teams perform in competitions, exhibitions, and on video,” says other co-captain Hans Sahni, CC ’08.

There are bhangra teams on college campuses throughout the nation and a number of independent, non-school-affiliated teams as well. Despite its traditional roots, bhangra has modernized since spreading to the U.K., U.S., and Canada in the 1990s, Sahni says. The music now is “more youth-oriented and has more of a hip-hop influence,” he says.

CuBHANGRA meets for practice three times a week for a minimum of two hours each session. Inevitably, spending so much time together has resulted in a strong bond among the members. “We go out together, study together, go to competitions,”

Basement bhangra: Columbia’s bhangra team practicing in the basement of Lerner.

but also Boston Bhangra, which is another well-known competition where cuBHANGRA placed first in 2006. Sekhar says they usually stick to events in the Northeast due to the limited funding they receive from the college, “but this year we went to Vancouver—we got into a competition there, so that was really exciting.”

While bhangra’s popularity may be attributed to a large and very active South Asian community on campus, Sahni says, “I don’t think it has to do with the number of South Asians on campus. Literally every college has a bhangra team. Though at Columbia most of the team members are South Asian, other college teams have all different kinds of ethnicities and races. People like hearing the music—there is a hip-hop influence in

creative,” Sahni says. “We try to think of ways to be different and more exciting and more entertaining. There is a skeleton of set moves, and we just build on that.”

While celebrated for its performances, cuBHANGRA is not solely a performance group. For those who’d like to try their hands (and feet) at bhangra, the club offers a free weekly dance lesson in Lerner on Saturday afternoons. For those confident in their bhangra skills, tryouts for the team are held at the beginning of the fall semester and are open to all students.

“We encourage people to try out who are interested and not necessarily South Asian” Sahni says. “We want to keep it diverse,” Sekhar adds. ///







*"I FIND THAT SO MANY SPOKEN WORD ARTISTS SAY ALMOST THE SAME THINGS ALL THE TIME—BUT THERE'S JUST SO MUCH TO BE TALKED ABOUT. I WANT TO FOCUS ON MY STUDIES AND TRY TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO MAKE WHAT I STUDY BENEFIT FROM HOW I PRESENT, AND HOW I PRESENT BENEFIT FROM WHAT I STUDY."*

# Poetic Justice

slam poet ishmael osekre speaks from the heart

BY DANIELLE WIENER-BRONNER

PHOTO BY MOLLY CROSSIN

THE FIRST TIME ISHMAEL OSEKRE, GS '09, performed at the Bowery Poetry Club, not everyone was impressed.

"Son," said the owner of the club, "the next time you want to preach, go find a church."

Osekre declined the advice and has continued creating and performing his particularly thought-provoking poetry.

Osekre was introduced to slam poetry in high school in Accra, Ghana, after a classmate won a trip to Florida through a slam poetry competition.

Osekre decided to try his hand at the competition, and while it called for short pieces, Osekre found that once he started writing, he had a lot to say. As his poetry got longer, he began to incorporate a performative element in his pieces, dramatizing his presentation and backing his words with a beat.

"In Ghana, people were used to intellectuals writing 12-line poems, or five lines, or whatever—so it was a new thing for people to see a poem that told a story, that had a lot of rhythm, that wasn't rapping, that was ... satisfying and inspiring."

After moving to New York to attend Columbia, Osekre found a thriving community of spoken word artists in the city. He joined their ranks as a performer and as an observer, drawing on the art

of others to enhance his own work. Although he has done significant work in Ghana—performing on radio and television—Osekre still wants to refine his message.

"I find that so many spoken word artists say almost the same things all the time—but there's just so much to be talked about. I want to focus on my studies and try to figure out a way to make what I study benefit from how I present, and how I present benefit from what I study. I'm working a lot more on content, so that I can have a really, really good package and not just be another poet out there."

This self-aware, savvy approach to writing poetry is at the core of Osekre's art. He works on his accent so that he can be understood by more people and repeats key phrases to ensure that listeners take something away from the performance.

Slam poetry is about the relationship between the poet and the audience, and Osekre takes no chances with this connection, employing his smarts, his charisma, and his culture to connect with the people for whom he performs.

Ever the perfectionist, he prefers to slam on campus when he is experimenting with new

methods and only performs in public after his poetry is polished, conveying a clear message. His poetry is built around this message, which is one of advocacy for Africans he feels responsible to represent.

Owner of the Bowery Poetry Club aside, Osekre says he has received an overwhelmingly positive response to his poetry, and he has taken steps to expand his audience. Recently, Osekre has formed a band, the name of which is as yet undecided (although they are currently considering Interrobang, as well as Bush and the Cheneys.)

Striving to develop his art, Osekre hopes to move spoken word steadily in the direction of music, without crossing over into rap territory. "It's going to be a fusion of African music, soft rock, a little bit of light hip-hop, with spoken word instead of rap, and very strong hooks that make you remember the message."

Despite being in the early stage of its creation, the band has managed to write and perform a song, "No More," that is included on the soundtrack for an independent film called *Blackout*. Don't be surprised if you see this video on television as Osekre sent copies of the single to MTV and MTVU. For now, you can catch the video on YouTube.

Along with plans to continue his education, Osekre hopes to one day return to Ghana, if only to see his family and regain some of the perspective he thinks he may have lost here in New York.

"I know there is a responsibility to heavily contribute to Ghana and Africa, and I feel strongly about that. But I'm still sorting that out, so I'm not going to rush that, but I know I want to get back to school after I graduate. But for now, the band is still a very significant part of the things that I want to do. I also don't think that being in the band will distract me from some of the things that I'm trying to do." \\\



# Rioting in the Streets

ra ra riot on sudden success

BY LIANNA CARRIGAN  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF TOURB

MOST COLLEGE BANDS CAN'T GET their friends to listen to their demos, much less get booked for the CMJ Music Marathon and SXSW music festival between touring with indie darlings Art Brut and Tokyo Police Club, all within the first year they play together. Syracuse University's Ra Ra Riot is looking forward to the release of its first full-length album later this year on the independent label Rebel Group, with which they recently signed. The group, whose members all moved to Brooklyn last year, is now on its second headlining tour and selling out large venues, including New York's Bowery Ballroom. Thanks to a MySpace presence and significant Internet hype, these recent grads have persevered, despite experiencing more than their share of tragedy.

In June of last year, their drummer, John Pike, was found dead after a night of partying near Fairhaven, Mass. The band announced on its Web site, "This has felt like the unraveling plot of a tragic piece of fiction ... nothing would have prepared us for such an immense loss." Though the emotional trauma seemed insurmountable, the band decided to replace the beloved friend and band mate with a new drummer, Cameron Wisch. As the band continues to cope with death and its aftermath, it also looks forward to riding the wave of new-found success.

Milo Bonacci, the band's guitarist, is modest about the band's rapid boost in popularity. "I wouldn't say it's 'fame' necessarily. It's been growing since our first shows ... We were all excited that the Bowery Ballroom show sold out, but we weren't expecting it."

Ra Ra Riot's self-titled EP includes six high-energy, bouncy, strings-coated pop songs that highlight the band's powerful and youthful exuberance. The enthusiasm each member seems to have for the music is evident in the EP's tight sound. The band members haven't always felt such a strong connection to each other. When the musicians started playing together, Bonacci says they were just "a string of people who knew each other or of each other." Still, Ra Ra Riot has come together to produce a compact, well-produced sound that has constantly proven itself ready for indie-rock critics and fans alike.

Each member has a distinctive musical talent, but the two female members, Alexandra Lawn and Re-



Lead singer Wesley Miles and guitarist Milo Bonacci of Ra Ra Riot have overcome the death of their drummer to achieve indie fame.

becca Zeller, are the most unconventional. Both are classically trained musicians—Lawn is a cellist and Zeller a violinist. "None of us really knew what to expect," Bonacci says. "It was the first time they [Lawn and Zeller] had been asked to write their own parts for something. Up until that point they were reading music—they were trained that way." Lawn and Zeller also

had to adjust to the band's improvisational rehearsal process. "We all give suggestions, and everyone more or less writes their own part, but everybody can give feedback ... Songs take shape at rehearsal with everybody involved," says Bonacci.

The band's use of strings has inspired comparisons to Arcade Fire and The Olivia Tremor Control. One of the reasons why Ra Ra Riot's strings work so well

Smaller bands are given this opportunity to get an audience from all over the world." He has reservations about MySpace's corporate backing from Fox Interactive Media, but remains grateful for the easy publicity. "It's definitely helped us in a lot of ways. And, it's a great way to promote and get in touch with people and find other bands."

The group has strong ties with hype-machines-and-Columbia-graduates Vampire Weekend, which it featured as its openers on a tour to honor Pike. Bonacci admits that the band has been listening to the Vampire Weekend album non-stop, and that it is definitely "one of our favorites." In addition, Ra Ra Riot's lead singer, Wes Miles, has "a side project called Discovery, which is really awesome," and which also features Rostam Batmanglij, Vampire Weekend's keyboardist.

While Ra Ra Riot's gentle, string-laced tones aren't likely to spur an actual riot, the group is quietly taking over the indie scene with their energetic live shows and seemingly constant touring. These industry beginners will probably overcome the buzz and come into their own, but until then, the musical riot ensues. \\\

*"I WOULDN'T SAY IT'S 'FAME' NECESSARILY.  
IT'S BEEN GROWING SINCE OUR FIRST SHOWS."*

is because they don't rely on synths to hide lapses in their technique. The musicality of the two instrumentalists shines through each song.

I came across Ra Ra Riot via MySpace and, judging by comments on the site, so did many of their fans. Bonacci doesn't mind the online attention. "[MySpace] has been kind of the great equalizer.





# THE MANHATTANVILLE PROJECT

REPORTING BY RAPHAEL POPE-SUSSMAN

PHOTOS BY MOLLY CROSSIN,

DANIELLA ZALCMAN,

AND DIANA WONG

We walked up Broadway to Manhattanville—a short trek between two starkly different worlds. At St. Mary's Episcopal Church, a fixture in the neighborhood for more than a century, three people immersed in conversation stood on the landing. Two of the three declined to be interviewed, but the third—Sheldon Garland, who works at the AIDS center across from St. Mary's—had a lot to say about Columbia's expansion into Manhattanville.





## Sheldon Garland

“They buying up all the property, the laundromats and everything else. ... Without the laundromats, without the supermarkets and everything, we don’t have nothing. And you’ve got poverty people living here. You got, I work right there, across the street, the AIDS center. ... I’m a counselor. Here’s my ID, the whole nine yards. It’s ridiculous, you know.”

“We want our community to be a community, not a community that’s going to thrust other people to come in here to take over our businesses. We want to have our little consumers on the corner, with their license, and things like that. That’s what we want for us. And it seems like Columbia don’t want that. They just want to take over the whole neighborhood. They taking 3333. They can’t get my church. I live in the Bronx. I was raised and born here. My kids was raised and born here. My grandchildren are here. And that’s what I want, for this community, and you can quote me on that.”

“It’s like a separation coming, from the AIDS center. ... I’m trying to bring them back together. ... That’s my goal. Raising my daughter. ... What I’m trying to do is build this back into a whole family thing. ... It started here, that’s how they got that and that. And they separated. We communicate sometimes. ... We’re trying to bring this back, and that’s what counts. Bringing it back home.”

“And Columbia is trying to tear it apart, I’m sorry to say that, Columbia is trying to tear it apart. And I don’t think it’s right. Columbia’s buying up everything. Leave the foundation where the foundation belongs, OK. That’s how I feel about that.”



## Jimmy Papoutsidis

“I think it’s a positive thing for the neighborhood with the new construction. But I think businesses would probably not be so happy.”



## Luis Nuñez ➔

THE EYE: “Do you have any feelings about it?”

NUÑEZ: “No.”

THE EYE: “Will it bring more business?”

NUÑEZ: “Maybe, yeah.”

THE EYE: “Are you worried you’ll get less business?”

NUÑEZ: “I don’t think that. No. ... Maybe they gonna raise the rent, but you know that New York is expensive. It’s like that.”



## ◀ Amrik Singh

“ They forced us to sell this, and we don’t want to. Well, I’m the manager here. My boss saved [up for] this property dollar by dollar. This is no good, this is not fair. ”





## ◀ Joanna Perez

“ I feel they’re kicking me out of my home, and that sucks. That’s what I have to say. ... By making their community bigger, their college ... I’m going to have to move, no home for me, I’ll live in the streets. ”



## Angel Torres

“ I feel very bad. I just work here. Without this I don’t know what will be here. Him, him *[points to co-workers at distance]* not only me will be affected. This will really affect me because ... my job, you know what I mean? All that I know is that they’re *[Columbia]* closing everything. This is my place. ”



# Write On Campus

columbia MFA students talk about their prose

BY HANNAH PERRY

PHOTOS BY MOLLY CROISIN

The entire graduate writing program at Columbia is tucked away on the fourth floor of Dodge. The 70-or-so students in each graduating class take all of their classes here, but it's easy to miss the department if you aren't one of them. This is too bad—Zadie Smith, here last weekend, and Gary Shteyngart, who teaches a weekly workshop, are among the literary luminaries who have been known to pop in for a talk or to offer instruction. A few second-year MFA students preparing to write their graduate theses sat down with *The Eye* to discuss their work and writing as a craft. Though their responses varied as widely as the differences in their style—Columbia isn't turning out cookie cutter writers—almost all of them agreed on the basic difficulty of talking about their prose. After all, for students developing writers' instincts, the problem with giving interviews is that the editing is out of your hands. But no matter how these up-and-coming talents write their own futures, keep your eye peeled for their work next time you're browsing at the Strand.

## Adam Wilson

One of Adam Wilson's stories opens with two people in bed, with possibly the first literary use of a lobster as an erotic toy. Like most of the other MFA students, Wilson was attracted to the idea of pursuing a formal graduate program for the discipline it imposes, but also for the community of like-minded students and prestigious faculty. He has found that the intimacy and intensity of the Columbia workshops make him tougher on his own writing—he laughs as he recounts something one of his professors once wrote on one of his papers: "I'd kick my own ass if I wrote this line." When asked where he gets ideas, he deadpans, "My shrink asks me that question all the time," before explaining that he often thinks of an opening line first and develops a story from there. He tries to be particularly precise about the voice of a piece, because anything that rings false has the potential to derail the entire work. Parts of his dialogue come from his habit of eavesdropping. "I really like the way teenagers and drug addicts speak," he says. He's also intrigued by what is not said in a conversation—the ideas and emotions that speakers aren't able to express with words. "I'm interested in the language people create when they don't have the language to say what they want," he says.

## Caroline Seklir

The only native New Yorker who spoke with *The Eye*, Caroline Seklir does not dismiss the romantic idea of the city as a mecca for writers. "I think something New York teaches you about writing is that there are endless ways to talk, to be," she says. But the piece she's been working on lately takes place in a small town far north of Manhattan. Seklir admits that in the past she wrote mostly about what she knew, like the old cliché. Finding it claustrophobic, she made a radical shift toward writing about experiences she's never had. She has now found a natural middle

ground between the two extremes. Seklir decided to get the MFA in part so she could teach, because she appreciates the difficulty of getting fiction published and wants to keep a second career option open. Seklir has always been surrounded by books—her mother is a librarian—so she takes it for granted that elements of books she's read occasionally surface in her stories. She gets excited while talking about her first exposure to her favorite writers. Of reading Nabokov she says, "I thought, 'God, I never thought about stories being that way.'"

## Frank Winslow

When asked why he decided to get an MFA, Franklin Winslow's first response is, "I have birds in my head?" He explains that for him, attaining the degree is like the development of a set of skills in any craft—something that has real value for him because it can never be lost or stolen. One of his stories is a surreal black comedy about a woman who finds herself in a tumultuous relationship with Water—the element, that is, not a last name. The piece reflects a method he's currently using to start writing, inspired by the Russian Futurists, which involves letting the form of a story shape its content. When he doesn't like what he's writing, it gets altered or set aside, but as he sees it, "Nothing is ever finished. The most I can ask of a piece is its greatest possible balance." Winslow draws inspiration for tone and plot from impressions he's stored of the places he knows well, such as "San Diego's biker culture ... and Arkansas' backwoods' drawl." He thinks his best work is informed by an amalgamation of these impressions and material from books that he's read and absorbed. And as for the city he currently calls home, he says, "New York strikes me as our global print capitol, which makes it a great place to be excited about writing. It gets in your blood."



## Lincoln Michel

Lincoln Michel is working towards writing a novel for two reasons: he considers it more challenging than a short story collection, but also, as he puts bluntly, "shorter stuff doesn't sell." He admits to feeling insecure about his future prospects for supporting himself in a world where writing lacks some of the cultural importance it once had. "Books aren't icons. I think that in the past, books had this real effect." He points out that short fiction no longer appears in most major newspapers and magazines, with the exception of the



New Yorker, which nearly always publishes pieces by seasoned writers. In fact, he says, "I don't know too many writers who think that their writing is important" on a cultural level, the way that film and visual art students often view their work. But he finds some comfort in an emerging trend toward more recognition of the increasingly complex work writers do for mass entertainment series, like the oft-cited *Sopranos* and *The Wire*. He says, "I don't really think people value *Macgyver*, or whatever, like they do the *Sopranos*." In any event, he adds wryly, he can always write for the *Simpsons* if nothing else pans out.

## Belinda McKeon

Belinda McKeon came to Manhattan from Dublin, seeking time to devote to her novel and a certain "structure and focus" she couldn't find while writing on her own. She enjoys the MFA program, where "writing is very obviously and very consciously the main thing in your life, and where you are ... expected to take the work of writing seriously and where you are surrounded by people who do the same thing." This has helped make writing the focal point of her life, for now. Having distance from her native country also makes it easier for her to write about it—her current novel is set in rural Ireland. She says that usually, she sits down to write without any starting point in mind. Her approach is simply "to face up to the blank screen and once I can do that, it begins to come." Belinda is eloquent when asked about the power of writing. "Literature has the power to entertain, to move, to inspire ... to make sense of the difficult and the incomprehensible," she says, "and to take our experiences of language and the world and ourselves to a different level." \\\



# Got Gefilte?

## demystifying columbia's kosher campus

BY CHRISTOPHER MORRIS-LENT

PHOTO BY MOLLY CROSSIN

IN MORNINGSID HEIGHTS—on an island where roughly 15 percent of the population is Jewish, in a neighborhood that includes the Jewish Theological Seminary—surely delicious kosher eateries are as numerous as the soul-food purveyors near Morningside Park or the taco trucks a mile or so to the east in El Barrio. Right?

But first, a few explanations for the layman. Most Columbians, myself included, have a vague sense of what it means to keep kosher. But I sensed there were gaps in my knowledge, so I sought to fill them with tidbits from the most authoritative source I could find: Rabbi Joel Roth, Talmudic scholar, for-

went up to the register.

"Flex or dining?" asked the cashier.

"Kosher or traif?" I countered.

"They're kosher," he retorted. "The pastries are from 'Brother's.'"

"Todah," I said cryptically. I bought the croissant and left.

Later, a Google Maps search would turn up a number of bakeries with "brothers" in the title, all of them in the outer boroughs, none of them offering verisimilitude of kosher fare. But the cashier's assurance left me satisfied: after all, I said to myself, it is the mind that sins—not the body. Noshing on

stituted for chef's hat. I perused the menu, with its selection of knishes, reubens, and "appetizing" Israeli salads, and ordered a turkey sandwich, which he prepared perfunctorily and handed to me. When pressed for details, he revealed that his name was Yoel, and that the deli, as its indefensible borders betrayed, was a very small-scale operation indeed.

"Are there any other decent options for eating kosher on campus?" I asked. "Not that I know of," he answered.

Still, I found a few alternatives. There is Café Nana at the Hillel Center across the street from Schapiro, as well as Hewitt Hall. After ingesting the entirety of my sandwich—typical campus fare of flavorless turkey, pulpy tomato, crunchy lettuce, trenchant mustard, I retired to my dorm for a few hours before heading across Broadway on a rare post-first-year dining hall expedition. After being swiped in, I fixed my gaze upon the gastronomic promised land: the kosher section. Rows upon rows of veggies fresh from the kibbutz clouded my vision, until I realized that I was under surveillance. I found myself shunted into the bread-lines that lead to surly servers and typify the Hewitt experience.

Upon returning home, I conferred with my friend Mandie Nowak, CC '10. Nowak embodies the conflicting ethos toward observing kashrut at Columbia: she is an avowed cultural Jew, but not really religious—she observes "ingredient kosher," that is, she refrains from eating pork and milk and meat together, but considers improperly slaughtered ("non-hescher") chickens acceptable. She doesn't evince the same self-renunciatory zeal of a Rabbi Roth, who explained neglect of kashrut as a willful exertion of moral remission. "Kashrut is a reflection of God's will, and that in and of itself is the reason [for adhering to it]," he says. Rabbi Roth concedes that many Jews neglect the religion's dietary restrictions, however.

Why the widespread disregard? Nowak, who does pay for access to Hewitt's kosher section, rationalizes her creed of compromise. "If I'm at a Japanese restaurant, am I really going to expect everything they serve to be hescher? No ... but I'll have the chicken or the tuna, and stay away from the pork and the crab ... I do what I can," she says.

For some it is an issue of convenience—for others, of economics. Looking at my depleted wallet—the turkey sandwich at the Hartley Kosher Deli was \$6.25—it was hard not to agree with such lines of reasoning, but if it touched something spiritual within me, even a croissant would be worth such a price. \\\

*KEEPING KOSHER 'IS A PERFECTLY GOOD TRADITION TO KEEP IF IT TOUCHES SOMETHING SPIRITUAL WITHIN YOU, BUT IF IT DOESN'T, IT'S A MOST LABORIOUS ASPECT OF JUDAISM TO UPHOLD.'*

mer dean of the rabbinical school at JTS, dissenter from the 2006 decision to permit the ordination of gay rabbis, and holder of far too many other accolades to list here. Theologically speaking, he is the grand homme of conservative Judaism.

Rabbi Roth graciously offered me a brief explanation of kashrut—Jewish dietary laws. "Only certain types of animals are kosher [i.e., not pigs], only certain types of seafood are kosher [i.e., not shellfish], and animals have to be slaughtered in a specific way, soaked and salted in a specific way before cooked and consumed. There is a prohibition of eating meat and dairy products together, so in a kosher home, you will see two sets of dishes, two sets of silverware and things like that."

Rabbi Roth estimates that close to 98 percent of JTS students adhere to these laws. Brandon Wolfeld, GS/JTS '10, offers a more modest estimate: "I'd say about 70 percent [of JTS students]," he says. Wolfeld does not keep kosher, and he considers himself more of a cultural Jew than a religious one. He says keeping kosher "is a perfectly good tradition to keep if it touches something spiritual within you, but if it doesn't, it's a most laborious aspect of Judaism to uphold." He also estimated that about 10 percent of campus in general keeps kosher.

But how laborious? Curious, I decided to restrict my diet to kosher fare for an entire day. If 10 percent of campus (Wolfeld's guess) and 98 percent of JTS (Rabbi Roth's guess) could do it religiously day in and day out, I figured I could keep kosher for 24 hours.

The first stop on the tour was that oft-exalted epicenter of campus dining. I speak not of John Jay, nor of the Avery basement café, but of the Dodge Blue Java. I found sandwiches from some bastardized incarnation of Zabar's lying in the fridge, pharisaically juxtaposing turkey and swiss, ham and gruyere. I strolled past the cave of worldly delights, calmly selected a croissant from the battery of pastries, and

the last few bites of croissant while schlepping back to East Campus, it occurred to me that I was hardly satiated, so I reset my course for Hartley Hall, where I expected to find the fabled Hartley Kosher Deli.

Of course, I didn't. The deli is actually in John Jay, inset between the lobby and the buffet area of the dining hall, like Israel between the Mediterranean and the Arab states. It is a small enclave of culinary civilization surrounded on all sides by the barbarism of laxative-laced cafeteria fare. I was greeted by a man with a flowing brown beard, yarmulke sub-

Finding quality kosher options on campus is more difficult than spending 40 years in the desert.





# Of Faith and Fashion

the inner workings of tehran's dress code

BY JAMES DEWILLE

PHOTO COURTESY OF SLATE

When you hear “fashion police,” what springs to mind? *Clueless*? *Mean Girls*? What about Iran?

In an effort to increase security, safety, and modesty in society, Iranian police are extending their jurisdiction to the world of fashion. Since April 2005, the Tehranian fashion police have led a crackdown on immodest dress among men and especially women in the Iranian capital. Now, roaming officers—often conservatively dressed women—warn women on the streets about their non-Islamic dress. Offenses like skirts that are too short, hijabs (headscarves) that sit too far back, revealing hair, or *manos* (overcoats) that are too tight or tailored can be punished with a fine of about \$60 and a signed statement promising to never appear in public in such a manner again. If the offender objects, minibuses are waiting to take them to police stations where their families must retrieve them and bring more modest clothing.

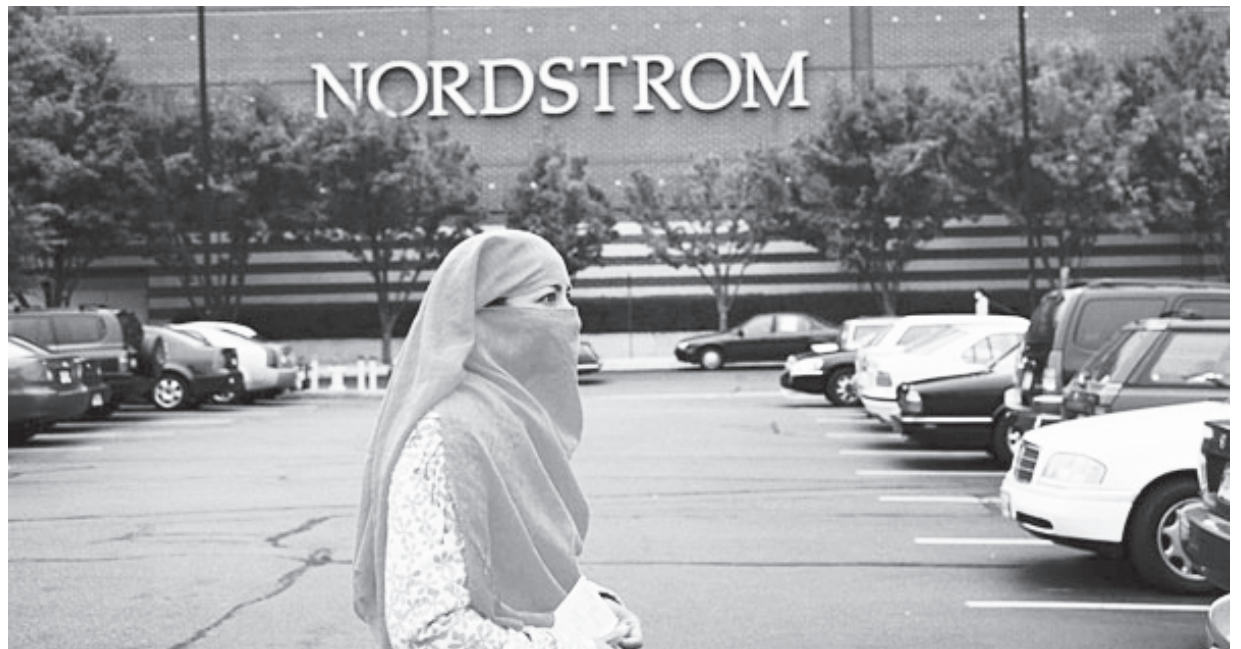
While the Tehranian chief of police, Ismail Ahmadi Moghaddam, claims these campaigns run smoothly with massive public support, the efforts of the fashion police have been met with much anger and objection. In 2007, over 2000 students at Shiraz University protested the banning of shorts, tight pants, and sleeveless shirts for both men and women in the single-sex university dormitories. Meanwhile, in Tehran's well-heeled north, wealthy and fashionable women continue to wear loose hijabs, tailored coats, and make-up, despite the constant threat of the police.

Current Iranian law, established during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, requires women to cover their hair and body shape under a hijab and loose fitting cloak or chador. While there are no direct references to wearing a hijab in the Quran, many find justification for it in Quran 24:31, which states, “And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and do not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments.” Other passages encourage the covering of bodies in public to avoid harassment. Modern interpretation of these lines, however, varies greatly from conservative concepts of full-body coverage, to more liberal views that embrace modest interpretations of Western styles and brands.

Women in nations like Iran are forced to reconcile their love of fashion and commitment to faith with the constant knowledge that choosing what to wear involves much more than trying to look fashionable. It makes a political and personal statement, with repercussions that are not only social, but often legal.

The fashion industry is taking notice of these mounting issues. With over 500 million Muslim women across the world, many with large amounts of capital at their disposal, the market for fashion that is geared toward these women offers intriguing potential. Many designers are already trying to tap in. Fashion Weeks have already sprung up in Dubai, Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey, and

Muslim women have to reconcile their beliefs with what they wear everyday.



Lebanon. In 2000, Yves Saint-Laurent and Jean-Paul Gaultier both showed looks that leaned toward this kind of modesty at the International Festival of African Fashion in Niger. Meanwhile, Muslim designers like British Sophia Kara-Imam, Mohammad Bahrami, and Fahimeh Mahoutchi have designed garments that keep fashion in mind while sticking to more traditional notions of modesty popular among a growing number of so called Fashion Fundamentalists. The designer Hussein Chalayan's Spring 1998 Collection, *Between*, explored the notion of Muslim modesty and the place of Muslim women in society through the traditional chador. The provocative, emotional collection presented a wide variety of looks, from veiled, half-naked women, to women in short

crackdown, the event has created an environment of constant struggle in regard to religious observance, personal expression, and political and legal consequences.

Opposition to these measures has become more and more frequent, not only in student protests, but within the government itself. Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, head of the Iranian judiciary, warned Tehran's chief of police against a potential backlash. A parliamentary commission issued a similar warning, explaining that actions of the fashion police crossed the line into the realm of cultural issues. Even an aide to President Ahmadinejad cautioned that the police “should not go to the extreme” in their efforts.

Despite the continued actions of the fashion police, some women in Iran ignore these mandates and continue to embrace Western fashions that satisfy their personal commitment to modesty. Many women try to synthesize the two worlds, believing fashion and faith are reconcilable. For them, the veil is a point of pride, with the hijab representing identity and solidarity. Others, such as Marjane Satrapi, author of *Persepolis*, vehemently oppose mandatory use of the hijab. Emel Abidin-Algan, former chairwoman of an Islamic women's association, chooses not to wear a hijab. She emphasizes a woman's individual choice to do so and has even helped design a line of hats as a hijab-alternative.

The wide array of interpretation and practice has raised this issue to a global, political, and religious debate. Each perspective claims the hijab as a fulcrum of their view, transforming it into a symbol loaded with ideas, able to satisfy or enrage depending on the angle. Discussion occurs around the world and while Iranian authorities try to stifle debate with legal consequences, people continue to raise the issue of individual choice and personal religious conviction. In fact, both sides of the debate seem to exist and persist despite, and even in opposition, to institutional and mandatory practice. Liberals focus on the idea of personal freedoms, while many conservative voices raise the issue that measures like the fashion police not only cross lines into cultural affairs, but also mandate what should and must be a proud choice of personal commitment. In this way, people in Iran and beyond have hoisted up the issue of clothing, making daily choices of dress that are packed with immense meaning.\\

FROM HERMÈS AND DIOR HIJABS TO LONG BARNEYS JACKETS, WOMEN ARE STYLIZING THEIR LOOKS WHILE KEEPING ISLAM IN MIND.

skirts and full veils. Chalayan, who currently works as a design consultant for Tse New York, continues this exploration with chador-inspired pieces for Tse, such as turtlenecks that extend over the face and floor-length cashmere coats. *MSLM* magazine, a Dutch publication for Islamic women, has had exhibits of clothing that maintain that the hijab is not a symbol of oppression, but rather one of self-confidence, femininity, fashion, and pride for a young, modern woman.

As designers and clothing companies begin to design with modesty in mind, many Muslim women have been able to accommodate their religion and interest in fashion. From Hermès and Dior hijabs to long Barneys jackets, women are stylizing their looks while keeping Islam in mind.

Still, these liberal interpretations of dress are often derided by conservative observers as anti-Islamic. In response to the popularity of Western-inspired styles, the Iranian Commerce Ministry, the police, and IRIB, the state broadcasting corporation, put on the nation's first government-approved Dress Fair. The event, received with frustration and even anger by many women, presented proper, “modest,” Muslim dress, according to the 1979 laws. Paired with the fashion police's



## Yes He Can

BY RAPHAEL POPE-SUSSMAN

PHOTO BY RAPHAEL POPE-SUSSMAN'S DAD

I'm in, and I'm in to win. Yes we can, Columbia. Yes, we can. We can do a lot of things.

I can juggle. You can vote. I can touch my elbow with my tongue. You can vote. I can even play the recorder with my nose. And you, my friends, can vote.

That's right. I am announcing my candidacy for CCSC. I'm running for president. There are a lot of cynics out there. You know, the kind of people who stick up their noses at student government. The kind of people who claim student government can't get things done, that the administration does everything around here. The kind of people who say, "Raphael, you can't just run for president. You need a whole election slate. You need to meet a litany of qualifications. And you missed the deadline." Well, you know what? I'm not going to let a few naysayers naysay me out of the political process.

I'm not doing this for myself. I don't have some sick lust for power. I just want to be the change you see in the world. Joseph Stalin once said, "[Raphael Pope-Sussman losing the race for CCSC] is a tragedy. A million deaths is a statistic." Do you want to cause a tragedy worse than a million deaths? No. You don't.

I will make Columbia a truly global university. My opponents say Columbia is flat. But I know that it is globular. If elected, I will make it even more globular. My opponents are a bunch of criminals. They stole money from the treasury. Do I have proof? Maybe. The last thing I would do is share my proof with you before receiving your vote. That would compromise the security of this school.

I want to make Columbia a better place for students. Did you know that "Columbia" can be rearranged to spell "A Cub Limo"? No, you didn't. Because your student government is keeping you in the dark. They don't care about you.

I promise to be open. I promise to tell the truth. I will make Columbia like one giant "Cub Limo."

But that's not my only platform. No, no, no. I have dozens. I promise you free printing. I promise you free donuts. I promise you free hookers. Free everything, on me!



Ruggedly, Raphael Pope-Sussman looks into the future. He is the candidate you'd want to have a beer with.

But wait! There's more! I will block JuicyCampus. I will also prevent all such sites from being launched in the future. I will build you a building in Manhattanville. But it will be the most ethical building in world history. It will be made of soybeans and recycled cardboard. Nothing unethical will happen on my watch.

Also, I will put a soda machine in your room. If you are reading this, you may be saying, "Well gee, how is Raphael going to get the money for thousands of soda machines?" I won't. I will only buy one, and I will put it in your room. That's how dedicated I am.

Sometimes I get dizzy thinking about all the stuff I will do. For instance, I will increase

24-hour study space. I also promise to create 36-hour study space, and, for emergencies, 48-hour study space. I will also make sure your suite is officially designated "24-hour study space," and you will be permitted to study there at all hours of the night, without fear of persecution.

I will deliver all these things and more.

So vote Raphael Pope-Sussman for CCSC. \\\



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# In the Mood For Blueberries

back of the envelope script-writing

BY MARTA JAKUBANIS

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY



“You can’t eat Gus’s Fried Chicken over the internet!” Norah Jones said passionately at a press conference on Tuesday promoting her big screen debut in Wong Kar Wai’s new film, *My Blueberry Nights*. “Yeah, you can’t taste the grease,” David Strathairn said. Even though that exchange was only a brisk tangent, it is also somehow very applicable to the film itself—you can’t really talk about it unless you’ve seen it.

Wong has directed eight feature films to date, but his *Chungking Express*, *In the Mood for Love*, and *2046*, despite wide critical appreciation, only ring a bell to foreign film aficionados. *My Blueberry Nights* is the first English-language film from the acclaimed Hong Kong director, and it’s bound to introduce him to a wider Western audience, with a star-studded cast that includes Jude Law, Natalie Portman, Norah Jones, Rachel Weisz, and David Strathairn.

Jones plays Elizabeth (or Lizzie, depending on whom she’s talking to), a woman going through a really rough breakup. One night, she wanders into a little diner somewhere in New York and strikes up a casual-yet-profound conversation with owner-waiter-do-it-all Jeremy (mopey-eyed Jude Law). After nights of such tête-à-têtes over luscious blueberry pie, the film takes off in a different direction as soon as something resembling a romantic inclination is born between the two. Lizzie sets out on a journey across America in order to, presumably, learn something about herself and mend her broken heart.

Waitressing and bartending her way through life, she encounters an ensemble of characters whose aches and longings are often much graver than hers. She befriends a troubled cop (David Stathairn) fighting alcohol addiction and his wife’s betrayal, the wife herself (a mesmerizing Rachel Weisz, portraying layers of pain beneath her tarty demeanor), and a down-on-her-luck gambler (Natalie Portman, with heavily bleached hair) who defines living in denial.

This massive story (reflected in the lengthy cast list) is almost too cinematic to be true. With so many roles played by famous faces, Wong Kar Wai at times seems to be providing vehicles for his cast. However, each character does play an essential role—sort of.

All these encounters constitute “chapters,” as Mr. Wong likes to call them, which are parts of the narrative but not crucial for the narrative structure. Mainly because there really is no structure. Characters come and go, without any apparent reason, but in the end all these fleeting moments add up to Lizzie’s emotional journey. Wong’s shooting style reflects this spur-of-the-moment structure, for the director notoriously shoots without having a finished script, relying on improvisation of both the crew and the cast. Even when it comes to writing the script, he says, “I don’t like to have long conversations. I meet up with Lawrence [Block, the screenwriter] in a coffee shop, he gives me an envelope, I go home, read it, write my remarks, meet up with him in a coffee shop again, and give him the envelope,” which might be the reason behind his elliptically plotted films that rely more on moods evoked by picturesque locations, luscious color palette and a soundtrack that never strikes a false note. Such is *My Blueberry Nights*.

Cinematically, the film is a treat you don’t get to see often and never outside of venues like the Lincoln Cen-

ter Cinemas. Shot in New York, Memphis, and Las Vegas, the film renders the locations so beautiful, you might opt for eating them over blueberry pie if you had the option. A shallow focus lens is used in many scenes, giving the characters an ambience beyond mesmerizing.

All that being said, Wong places an emphasis on substance a well. “You don’t go for style just for style’s sake. Style goes along with the subject matter, but it’s all about the content,” he says. “The first thing is knowing what you want to say—style is secondary.” When asked about inspiration, he explains that his work is focused on self-expression. “I don’t challenge myself, I express myself. I make a film only because I want it to reflect a certain aspect of my mind-set at a certain time. That’s it.” But surely his inimitable style cannot be accidental, with its spot-on portrayals of the royal reds of Memphis and the neon greens of Vegas? “I’m not really conscious of those things. The film was shot so quickly, and so all the colors are coming from the places we chose to shoot at. But that’s what attracted me to them in the first place.”

Generally, the director won’t take much credit for the visual side of the film at all, emphasizing instead his crew’s invaluable input. “The director frames the shot, but lighting, movement and all that is Darius’ [Khondji, Wong’s Director of Photography] work,” he says.

His explanation behind achieving such stylistic unity is also painfully simple. “Before we started shooting, we went out on several trips around America and took a lot of pictures. That’s how we learned to understand one another,” he says. If only all creative collaborations produced such harmonious results.

These answers might be a little disappointing to Wong buffs, but perhaps David Strathairn has an antidote. “Asking questions like that about films like Kar Wai’s is like being a kid and trying to sneak a peek underneath the circus canopy to understand how the magic is done,” Strathairn says. “But really, when you see beauty, and emotion, that’s all you need to know, there should be no questions. Art should be a one-on-one experience. Don’t be the kid.”

And in the end, you can’t help but agree with him. As the lights in the theater go out and Wong unwinds his magic, accompanied by music personally chosen by Mr. Wong and Norah Jones, you don’t really care “how” anymore. Other questions, like Will Norah Jones make more movies? (“Maybe, but it would have to be something really special to match the *My Blueberry Nights* experience.”), Is she working on a new album? (“No, all I want is a vacation.”), and How was working with Jude Law? (“Fabulous. That’s it.”) remain legitimate, but in the end they don’t matter at all. *My Blueberry Nights* stands for itself.

The film opened on Friday, April 4th, as a somewhat abridged version of what was nominated for a Golden Palm at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival. It is definitely one of the best pictures you can see in the relatively dead month of April, at least until the Tribeca Film Festival starts. Depending on your tastes, it might become your favorite film ever, but one thing is certain: Mentioning Wong Kar Wai in a casual conversation will grant an immediate elevation to the status of cultured film connoisseur. \\\

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ŠKAMPA QUARTET  
IVA BITTOVÁ, Violin/Vocals

- Thurs, **Apr 17** at 7:30 PM  
eighth blackbird  
Susan Marshall, Stage Direction

The Trustees of Carnegie Hall gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the James R. and Frederica Rosenfield Foundation in support of the 2007–2008 season.

- Sun, **May 4** at 2 PM  
YEFIM BRONFMAN & FRIENDS

Yefim Bronfman, Piano | Gil Shaham, Violin  
Lynn Harrell, Cello | Emerson String Quartet

Perspectives concerts are made possible, in part, by a generous grant from The Alice Tully Foundation.

Carnegie Hall commissions in the 2007–2008 season are made possible, in part, by a grant from the New York State Music Fund, established by the New York State Attorney General at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

**Go to [carnegiehall.org](http://carnegiehall.org) for complete program information.**

### Crossing Musical Borders

- Thurs, **Apr 17** at 8 PM  
ASHA BHOSLE, Vocalist  
With Special Guest Amit Kumar, Vocalist

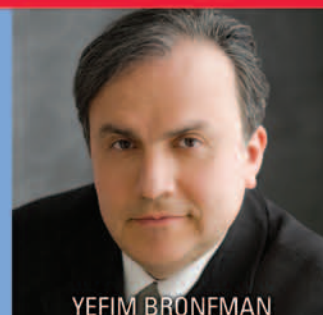
- Wed, **Apr 23** at 8 PM  
BOBBY McFERRIN, Vocalist  
CHICK COREA, Piano  
JACK DeJOHNETTE, Drums

Sponsored by Morgan Stanley

The Bobby McFerrin Perspectives concerts are supported, in part, by The Rockefeller Foundation's New York City Cultural Innovation Fund.

Perspectives concerts are made possible, in part, by a generous grant from The Alice Tully Foundation.

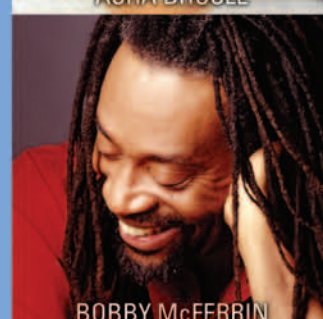
- Thurs, **May 1** at 8 PM  
JESSYE NORMAN, Soprano  
MARK MARKHAM, Piano



YEFIM BRONFMAN



ASHA BHOSLE



BOBBY McFERRIN



JESSYE NORMAN

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### Great Artists

- Mon, **Apr 14** at 8 PM  
ANNE-SOPHIE MUTTER, Violin  
LAMBERT ORKIS, Piano

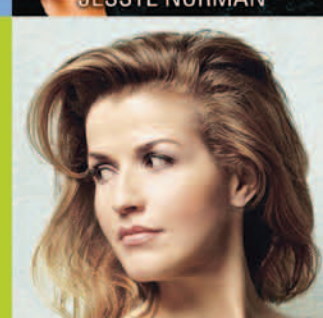
- Thurs, **Apr 24** at 8 PM  
LEIF OVE ANDSNES, Piano

- Sun, **May 4** at 2 PM  
YEFIM BRONFMAN & FRIENDS  
Yefim Bronfman, Piano | Gil Shaham, Violin  
Lynn Harrell, Cello | Emerson String Quartet

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complete program information.**



ANNE-SOPHIE MUTTER



LEIF OVE ANDSNES

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